

[20 April, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

Board of Education etc. regarding the proposal. A Sub Committee has been set up to suggest a module which is able to resolve the concerns and apprehensions expressed in different quarters.

(e) No time frame has been fixed to implement the proposal.

Direct Train from Dehradun to Chennai and Hyderabad

*513. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation for a direct train from Dehradun to Chennai and Hyderabad;

(b) if so, what decision has been taken thereon; and

(c) if not, whether Government would consider the feasibility of running a direct train or adding coaches to Chennai and Hyderabad, from Dehradun?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Some representations have been received for introduction of a direct train from Dehradun to Chennai and Hyderabad. The demands have been examined but not found for implementation due to operational and resource constraints.

Purchase of Raw Coconuts in Karnataka

*514. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme for purchase of raw coconuts in Karnataka, on the lines of the scheme in operation in Kerala, to check declining prices of coconuts; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The issue of purchase of raw coconut has been examined by the Government and it has not been found feasible to extend price support directly to the coconut cultivators. The

Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), who also examined this question recommended that major coconut growing State Governments including Karnataka should set up a net work of coconut purchase points so as to organize direct price support to coconuts based on Minimum Support Price of copra, and simultaneously augment the capacity to process and market diversified coconut products. This recommendation has been accepted by the Union Government and forwarded to the States for implementation.

Study of Astrology in Universities

†*515. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to introduce the study of astrology in Universities;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what is the justification for starting a new course in Universities, when they are already facing paucity of funds for their existing courses?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) This decision has been taken by the UGC.

(b) and (c) The UGC is of the view that there is need to rejuvenate Jyotir Vigyan and to undertake urgent scientific study and research in this area. The introduction of a course in Jyotir Vigyan shall in Universities not have any adverse impact on existing courses, as the UGC has not reduced grants allocated for other courses.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.